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LETTERS FROM THE MARQUIS DE LAFAYETTE TO HON. HENRY LAURENS, 1777-1780.

(Continued from the July number.)

[39]

Valley forge camp 1st June 1778

dear Sir

I have received your late obligling favor, and return you my very sincere thanks for it—if there is some thing to be prais'd in our late retreat, it is much more owing to the intelligence and exertions of the officers, to the spirit and good order of the soldiers I had the honor to command than to any merit of my own—our detachment was a fine one, and with such officers and men as I had that day, I schall willingly meet the best english troops upon equal terms—there was already spent among them a pride, a confidence an *esprit de corps* as could distinguish the best part of a veteran army.

whatever you think proper, my dear Sir, I heartily approve—therefore I have no objections to your keeping my west indian proposition as long as you please—but as we do'nt intend to go to philadelphia, when the ennemy will evacuate it, and I am myself intrusted with the care of leading a division of the army, I beg you would write me fully your sentiments about that

affair, and also the reasons of detaining the proposal, which you have promis'd to communicate to me—General Connway must be in york town by this time—he wants to get some kind of certificate from Congress and has wrote me upon the subject—you know my sentiments of some parts of his life, which remain fixed in my mind—but gnl connway is an officer in the french service, a gentleman of bravery and talents, and I ca'nt refuse to my own feelings to beg you would mention to Congress that I have wrote to you in his behalf. I do not believe they will deny some lines to him.

be so good as to ask to Ms Richard h. Lee when is the first pacquet to set out, when the second & &c—I am extremely obliged to you for the french papers which I will send back by the first opportunity—whenever you will forward others to me they'll be very wellcome—I instantly beg you would let me know if M^s carmichale is upon this continent, and when he is expected in Congress

with the highest Regard and most sincere affection I have the honor to be

dear Sir
Your most obedient servant
the Mis deLafayette

Endorsed: Marquis delafayette
1 June 1778 Rec^d 3^d—

[40]

Valley forge Camp 4th june 1778

dear Sir

I have received your favor of the 31st may and I am very sorry that I have not in my hands the candid account of the late enterprize from the ennemy printed in philadelphia by theyr directions. however if it is at head quarters I have desir'd the general's family to send it to you—all is Lye and a gross one since the beginning till the end.

I do not know if your friend Gnl *grant* is under arrest, but I know with all certainty that this affair has put him under a great disgrace from his Generals *howe* and *Clinton*—it is trüe to say that if that part of the surrounding Column which he had the Command of had not been so doubtfull, cautious, and found of *recconnoitring* every small object we did present to them, then I was likely to oppen my way with the bayonnet, and therefore to loose many men of a very valuable detachment before being safe—G^{nl} washington as it appears by his letter did not know then if G^{nl} *howe* was out—but we are know informed without the least doubt that all the Men fit to march, all the generals, and among them Sir henry Clinton, Sir william howe and even his brother admiral Lord *howe* were in my Rear or in my front.

be so good, my dear Sir, as to let me know when does your second pacquet go to france—for I imagine that you send copies of the same letters and the same accounts by several vessels—then I will send to M^{s} Richard h. *Lee* a parcel of letters for my family.

I am in a great impatience to see M^{s} carmichale the Secretary of the ambassade whom you had in paris—that gentleman I understand is arriv'd with the transports of cloathes—I hope those new cloathes will be once regimentaly and uniformly distributed—give me leave to reccommend once more to you the affair of colonel Armand—I wish also very ardently that a commission of major be conferred to M^{s} tousard who is indeed a very deserving gentleman—if congress was to make a present to our indians of vermillon, looking glasses, pipes, cloathes &c. it would have a fine effect.

gnl m^{k}intoch having Represented to me the necessity of having french gentlemen with him for settling the minds of the too much injur'd indians, I have engag'd four to follow him, who I think will be very useful

with a great impatience I expect the arrangement of the army, and I think a corps of three thousand grenadiers and chasseurs selected among our troops schall be the very soul of all our succe's and prouve of an infinite advantage. those very same men could afterwards be the *van guard* of the expedition whatsoever to be made in Canada, or be sent in the west indies in case of a *common expedition* where we must mix with the french Regiments such troops as will do honor to the American arms, bravery, and discipline—I speack of that *corps* to you, because I know it has been propos'd by his excellency.

You will say that I am *unetourde* when I'll have Confess'd that the little account of my debts with you has slept out of my pocquet, and that I do not know how to find it—but I Remember very well it was near seven thousand dollars, and the Articles which you had no time to collect will compleat about that sum—I therefore send you a bill of 7000[d]. upon Ms crips with a letter for the same gentleman which I beg you would forward—[1] if you find any Miss or defectursity in that ar-

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[1] The following is the letter, which seems never to have been forwarded:

Addressed: to
Ms john Crips esq.
at
Charlestown

Valley forge Camp 4th june 1778

dear Sir

tho' I have not had the pleasure of hearing from you since some time, I have no doubt but that you will have receiv'd a letter from Mon[s] Raimbeau &c when this schall fall into your hands—they must have been pay'd without any of the monney coming from the vessel, as it had been understood by the gentleman who does my business in france that I schould keep all the monney arising from the *victoire* in America. therefore, sir, I make no difficulty of directing you a bill

rangement be so good as to give me notice of it.
I hear g^{nl} Connway comes again into the service but I do not believe it.

with the warmest affection and highest Regard I have the honor to be

dear Sir — Your most obedient servant
the M^{is}deLafayette

Endorsed: Marquis delafayette
4 June 1778 Recd. 5th—

[41]

Valley forge cam 5th june 1778

dear Sir
inclos'd I have the honor to send you a letter for Congress which I beg you would present to them, and

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for to pay M^{s} *Laurens president of Congress* of 7000 dollars for which I am indebted to him.
I understand by your Letter that the sum in your hands is a considerable one—the Remains I will be extremely obliged to you to send me as soon as possible—I do'nt doubt but that M^{s} Raimbeau has wrote to you by many opportunities—but if by a accident which I can not believe you had not yet heard from him, and if you have no Objection to advance me 7000 dollars when you have the fund in your hands, I'll be much obliged to you to have them pay'd, and till the letter of M^{s} Raimbeau arrives you will keep an account of whatever interests you'll think proper— however I dare say I am certain that I may now dispose of the monney.
there is nothing new in camp but that the 20th of last month all the english army made an attempt upon a detachement from this of g^{nl} washington in which they did not succeed—we have all reasons to believe that *philadelphia* will be *ours* before long

be so good as to present my compliments to your family, gnl howe, g^{nl} moultrie, Ms ruttlege, ms m^{k}queen and his family and all my friends of charlestown

with the most sincere Regard I have the honor to be
dear Sir — your most obedient servant
the Mis deLafayette

Endorsed by Henry Laurens: Marquis delafayette
4 June 1778
Rec^{d}. 9th–

reccommend to theyr most particular attention—the Case of the late M^jor^ Moriss is not a common one, and it is not only because I'll alwaïs stand the advocate and friend of any brave soldier, but also out of a particular conviction of what his country is indebted for to him, that I am so sanguine upon that matter—I beg you would let me know the answer they will be pleas'd to make, for I do'nt doubt but that an answer whatsoever will be granted, tho' I have receiv'd none for some of my letters.

I hope the arrangement of the Army will soon come to us, as with it this of C^lol^ Armand, with the Greatest Regard and warmest friendship I have the honor to be

Dear Sir Your most obedient servant
the Mis deLafayette

Endorsed: Marquis delafayette
5 June 1778–

[42]

Valley forge Camp 7th june 1778

dear Sir

I beg that you would be so good as to trouble the h^onbl^ Congress with a new request of mine, which I am much Concern'd for—the ch^valier^ de *Cambray* who now waïts on Congress brings me letters from several of my most intimate friends, where he is particularly reccommanded to me—that Gentleman has also a letter from doctor franklin, and a certificate of some services he had the happiness of Rendering to the state of North Carolina—he will expose himself to you his services and his pretentions—I schall confine myself in assuring you that any thing which will be done for him I'll take as a particular favor—I make a Rule for me of Reccommanding any french gentleman who desires me to do so, and whom I think worthy of the attention of Congress—

but M^s de *Cambray* is one of those whom I owe to my friends and my feelings to be very particular upon.
with the highest Regard I have the honor to be
dear Sir Your most obedient servant
the Mis de Lafayette
the honorable the President of Congress
Endorsed: Marquis delafayette
7 June 1778
Rec^d 8th..

[43]

Addressed: *private*
to
the honorable Colonel henry Laurens esq.
pres. of Congress
at
York town

Camp at valley forge 7th June 1778

dear Sir
I have Receiv'd yesterday night the letters you have been so kind as to forward to me, and also your favor concerning g^nl connway—as C^lol john Laurens came just after to my quarters, I communicated it to him, and left the letters for his perusal.
gnl connway seems act a very mad part—I do'nt understand how he can alwaïs work against himself—but such is his head—be certain my dear sir that my ideas upon the last affair concerning you are as clear as your own may be, and that his conduct will be disavoed by any countryman or stranger who will know how matters stand—I have long ago oppened with you so much of my heart concerning that gentleman, as will render useless a longer staying upon his subject—
C^lol gouvion is just coming from the indians—that gentleman has been of a greater use to America among

them than it is possible to say—it is uncommon to join a greater modesty, to greater science, more agreeable [word blotted out] and more profound parts as an officer and gentleman—I very ardently wish that a commission of major be given to Ms tousard, and that the affair of Colonel Armand could be finish'd.
inclosed I have the honor to send you a letter for ms Le Chevalier de cambray, the gentleman who has given you the pacquet coming from france—I Reccommend that officer to your most particular kindness—he is directed to me by intimate friends of mine, whom I ardently want to oblige, and I beg as a friend, that you would give as much weight as possible to my public leters in his favor which I take the liberty to join here—I desire to be useful to him, and that himself and my friends may know the effect of my sollicitations in his behalf at theyr Reccommandation
with the most sincere friendship and Regard I have the honor to be

dear Sir Your most obedient servant
the Mis de Lafayette

Endorsed: Marquis delafayette
7th June 1778
Rec^d^ 8th—

[*To be continued in the next number of this magazine.*]